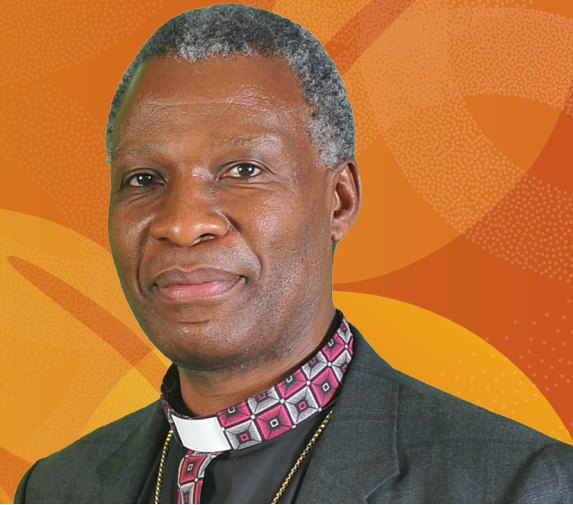


ADDRESS BY

ARCHBISHOP THABO MAKGOBA

at the 20 August 2024



“It is only through creating and holding a shared vision together, that we can change lives for the better.”

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, families of the fallen, and fellow South Africans. For those that I have not met, my name is Archbishop Thabo Makgoba. I am the patron of the Marikana Renewal Project and not only that, I work with the Day of Courageous Conversations and the Institute For Focused Action, IFCA. But mining and mining communities are deeply embedded in my heart and my prayer daily and activities are that mining and mining communities may continue to serve the common good.

And so today we gather to commemorate the lives lost at Marikana, to reflect on the profound impact this tragedy has had on our nation, and to renew our collective commitment to healing and rebuilding.

It is always with a heavy heart but unfailingly with a hopeful spirit that I come before you year after year on this solemn occasion and this year, twelve years after the events that shook our country to its core, the Marikana Massacre.

A terrible moment when we saw much of the worst of our fellow man, and years since have been a mix of tragedy and triumph, as we have sought healing, growth, forgiveness, and understanding.

South Africa as a nation, has travelled a similar path, but we seek a way forward that may be for the good of all.

At this time, we are called to remember the power of unity that comes through finding shared values and common dreams. We must remember that our strength lies in our unity, in our ability to come together with a common purpose and a shared vision for a better future. It is through this spirit that we find strength to move forward, to heal, and rebuild.

The intention of this renewal programme is not only to retrace our steps in order for healing and closure to occur, but also to reconfirm an ongoing commitment to improving the lives of the families impacted, and the communities and generations to come.

This commitment must not be a fleeting promise, but a steadfast dedication to making a lasting difference in the lives of those affected. The legacy of Marikana is a painful one, and its lessons must not be forgotten. It is only through creating and holding a shared vision, together, that we can change lives for the better.

We often talk of the need for building trust, but trust must be given – freely – and once given the recipient must treat it as the most precious and fragile gift that it is.

So, I remind all of you now to firstly give, and then care for, trust in one another. Not through words, but through action.

None of us can do the work of rebuilding families and communities alone. We must come together with a shared purpose, to make a lasting, positive, difference in the lives of all.

The road towards healing and restoration is a long and arduous one, marked often with challenges along the way, but we must not lose hope, and indeed we must not delay the fulfilment of hope. As Proverbs says, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.”

In 2020, Sibanye-Stillwater launched the Renewal Programme to honour the lives lost, facilitate healing for the families, and create a new, positive legacy for Marikana.

It is heartening for me to witness the progress made towards the families who lost loved ones and the work that has been done to positively impact the communities of Marikana. Let us continue to come together and unite with a shared purpose to realise the vision of renewal and growth.

And let us continue to forge ahead, sharing our collective knowledge, resources, and time, so that one day we can celebrate how far we have come in helping to establish a new and positive legacy for Marikana.

Yes, the road ahead is long, but so is the road behind – we have come a long way together. With unwavering dedication and a united spirit, we can create a future where the lessons of Marikana lead to a society rooted in justice, compassion, and shared prosperity.

There is a beautiful book about Robert Sobukwe, that powerful leader who stood against the pass laws, and it opens with an excerpt from a poem which I often reflect on, and I quote;

“so how can man die better, than facing fearful odds, for the memory of his fathers, and the service of his God?”

In our case, I ask how can we live better, for the memories of those who came before us, and in the service of our God?

So today let us honour the memory of those we have lost, by living better and committing to building a future that is better, a more just and equitable South Africa, a South Africa alive with hope and possibility.

Thank you, and may God bless us all in this journey.

God loves you and so do I.